

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DACCA 04973 140610Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /070 W
-----085742 140612Z /15

R 140526Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 433
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 4973

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, BG
SUBJECT: AWAMI LEAGUE SPLITS

REF: DACCA 3797

1. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE, AUGUST 12, AWAMI LEAGUE MODERATE LEADER MIZANUR RAHMAN CHOUDHURY ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF A COMMITTEE, WITH HIMSELF AS CONVENOR, OF WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS THE "NEO-AWAMI LEAGUE". THE "ESTABLISHED" AWAMI LEAGUE HEADED BY MALIK UKIL RESPONDED ON AUGUST 13 BY DENOUNCING MIZANUR RAHMAN AND DIRECTING THOSE REMAINING LOYAL TO MEET LATER THIS WEEK TO TAKE "FINAL DECISIONS" AGAINST MIZANUR RAHMAN AND HIS FOLLOWERS.

2. IT SEEMS LIKELY THERE WILL BE A SERIES OF MUTUAL EXPULSIONS WHICH WILL MAKE THE SPLIT IN THE ONCE RULING
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 DACCA 04973 140610Z

PARTY FINAL. BUT IT IS NOT AT ALL CLEAR THAT THE UKIL-LED GROUP WILL NOT ITSELF BE FACTIONALIZED. WITHIN THE UKIL GROUP ARE TWO FACTIONS WHICH, WHILE THEY APPARENTLY AGREE ON DEFENDING BAKSAL AS IT WAS A PARTY FORMED BY MUJIB, ARE AT SHARP ODDS ON WHAT IS DESCRIBED SIMPLISTICALLY AS "PRO-MOSCOW" AND "PRO-NATIONALIST" (MIZANUR RAHMAN'S GROUP HAVING BEEN ALREADY BRANDED "PRO-

AMERICAN" BY SOME). THE "PRO-MOSCOW" GROUP INCLUDES PARTY VICE PRESIDENT ZOHRA TAJUDDIN AND ONE TIME SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT MOHIUDDIN AHMAD AMONG OTHERS, AND POSSIBLY GENERAL SECRETARY ABDUR RAZZAK. INT THE MIDDLE APPAR TO BE SUCH AS YOUTH LEADER TOFAIL AHMAD. THE ROLES OF MANY OTHERS ARE NOT YET CLEAR, AMONG THEM BEING RETIRING AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES M.R. SIDDIQUI AND FORMER AMBASSADOR TO THE SOVIET UNION SHAMSUL HAQUE.

3. PRESS REPORTS OF MIZANUR RAHMAN'S MEETING ON AUGUST 12 STATE THAT 500 PERSONS ATTACHED FROM THE AWAMI LEAGUE AND ASSOCIATED FRONT ORGANIZATIONS. OTHER REPORTS INDICATE THAT THIS IS PROBABLY SOMEWHAT INFLATED. MIZANUR RAHMAN CHARGED THE BAKSAL REGIME OF MUJIB IN A TERMS WHICH WERE VERY SIMILAR TO THOSE USED BY PRESIDENT ZIA AND HIS ASSO- CIATES DURING THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN; SUBSERVIENCE TO FOREIGN POWERS, CORRUPTION, KILLINGS, JAILINGS, DESTRUCTION OF DEMOCRACY, ETC.

4. IT IS NOT YET KNOWN WHAT,IF ANY, RELATIONSHIP THE MIZANUR RAHMAN GROUP WILL HAVE WITH THE JATIYATABADI FRONT OF PRESIDENT ZIA. IT HAS BEEN KNOWN FROM SOME TIME THAT THE PRESIDENT'S CAMPAIGNERS WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE AWAMI LEAGUE SPLIT IN ORDER TO DECREASE THE POTENTIAL OPPOSITION FROM A UNITED PARTY IN THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS. BUT WHETHER THE FRONT WOULD BE WILLING, CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 DACCA 04973 140610Z

NOW THAT THE SPLIT HAS OCCURRED, TO GO THE NEXT STEP AND ASSOCIATE MIZANUR RAHMAN'S GROUP WITH IT IS NOT CLEAR. SOME FRONT MEMBERS WITH WHOM WE HAVE TALKED HAVE SUPPORTED SUCH A FURTHER STEP EVEN AT THE COST OF RESHUFFLING THE CABINET TO INCLUDE MIZANUR RAHMAN AND PERHAPS ANOTHER ONE OR TWO IN THAT BODY. THE PRESIDENT'S EXPRESSED DESIRE FOR A BROAD FRONT SUGGESTS THAT THE NEW GROUP'S ASSOCIATION IS POSSIBLE EVEN THOUGH SOME IN JAGODAL WILL OPPOSE AT LEAST PRIVATELY.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY SCHISMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DACCA04973
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780331-0701
Format: TEL
From: DACCA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780869/aaaacfgo.tel
Line Count: 104
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a2fe0d64-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 DACCA 3797
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1752797
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AWAMI LEAGUE SPLITS
TAGS: PINT, BG, AWAMI LEAGUE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a2fe0d64-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014